

## **Members of the Legislative Appropriations Committee**

Good evening ladies and gentleman. My name is Kyrstyn Devlin and I am a student of the Genetics and Biotechnology 2 class at The Sound School. I am here today to discuss the importance of the Genetics and Biotechnology course and why it is essential to increase its funding.

The Sound School is one out of the small handful of high schools to offer such an advanced course. Many people do not believe in teaching such an advanced subject to high school students. They feel the course itself may be too challenging and do not have the proper support and curriculum to teach high school students. However, they obviously have not seen the work of the high school students in the Genetics and Biotechnology course at The Sound School. We are proof that teaching such a course to high school students is possible.

The Sound School is an institution that fosters scientific curiosity, values challenging young minds and has a lot of faith and trust in its students. All the teachers provide the necessary support and preparation in order for their students to excel in the field of science. That is the main reason why we are capable of excelling in the Genetics and Biotechnology course. It is extremely challenging, but thanks to the help and support of our teacher, we have been able to comprehend the information with ease and apply it to the world around us.

This class has introduced me to a field of science I had no prior knowledge or interest in. I now know about Genetically Modified foods, the Human Genome Project, how to properly use certain lab equipment/conduct certain lab procedures, etc. The class sparked my interest in the field of science and lab work. It even gave me the opportunity to intern at the Yale School of Medicine.

The experience I obtained while interning at the Yale School of Medicine has been invaluable. From more lab experience to important life skills, this internship has laid the foundation for my future. I now conduct PCR, genotype, and other lab procedures with ease. On a regular day, the lab manager will give me a long list of jobs to complete. I have even built up enough trust that she now allows me to

complete these assignments independently. This alone has made me a more responsible individual. It means a lot to be given so much responsibility over important research projects. I have also developed patience through the particularly long and monotonous duties. Every day I attend my internship, I feel as though I am getting a bigger glimpse of my future in a laboratory. If nothing else, this internship has solidified my decision to pursue a science career. I am currently interested in becoming an Oncologist or Medical Geneticist.

Without the knowledge and preparation gained from the Genetics and Biotechnology class and the internship I was given, I would not have found something I was so passionate about nor been capable of excelling in this internship. I hope that in the future, we will have more funding to conduct more experiments and prepare the students for their futures in a lab setting. There are more students than internships available. By supplying the course with more funding, everyone will have more opportunities to discover what they are passionate about and see themselves doing for their future careers.

As you can see, the Genetics and Biotechnology course at The Sound School is extremely important and beneficial to us. Please increase funding for the agriscience programs by adopting the ECS Task Force School Choice Funding Recommendation into the Governor's Proposed Budget. I know this is not an easy decision to make, but please, keep the Genetics and Biotechnology course at The Sound School into consideration. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to present these comments this evening.

Kyrstyn Devlin- New Haven, Connecticut